



12th District Advisory Newsletter

FROM

CONGRESSMAN MEL WATT

FALL 2006

WASHINGTON OFFICE

2236 Rayburn H.O.B.
(202) 225-1510 Phone
(202) 225-1512 Fax

DISTRICT OFFICES

Charlotte

1230 West Morehead
Suite 306
Charlotte, NC 28208
(704) 344-9950 Phone
(704) 344-9971 Fax

Greensboro

301 S. Greene Street
Suite 210
Greensboro, NC 27401
(336) 275-9950 Phone
(336) 379-9951 Fax

Salisbury

County Government Building
130 West Innes Street
Salisbury, NC 28144
(704) 638-3198 Ext. 264
Thursdays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Winston-Salem

Black-Phillips-Smith Building
2301 North Patterson Ave.
Winston-Salem, NC 27105
(336) 721-9950
Monday & Wednesday
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

E-mail

nc12.public@mail.house.gov

Website

<http://www.house.gov/watt>

MEL'S COMMENTS:

VOTING RIGHTS ACT RENEWAL: A VICTORY FOR DEMOCRACY

The Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006 passed the House on July 13 by a vote of 390 – 33, passed the Senate on July 20 by a vote of 98 – 0, and was signed into law by the President on July 27, 2006. I was happy to be directly involved in every aspect of the process that led to this historic extension.

The Act extends for 25 more years provisions of the 1965 Voting Rights Act that would have expired in 2007. The provisions that were set to expire included the requirement that states with a long history of voter discrimination that discourages citizens from voting obtain judicial or Justice Department preclearance of any changes to voting procedures and the requirement that under certain circumstances bilingual language assistance be provided to citizens who do not speak English. The Act also clarifies the conditions under which the Justice Department may send federal observers when there are reasonable grounds to believe that violations of voting rights are about to occur and clarifies language in the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that had been misinterpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court.

There is no more basic right in our democracy than the right to vote, a right that many throughout the history of this country have fought, struggled and died to defend and make meaningful. I am gratified that the Congress and the President reaffirmed our commitment to protecting the right to vote and I am proud of the role I played in that reaffirmation. I hope that all of my constituents will honor that reaffirmation by voting on November 7 and in every election.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

WE HAVE NOT INCLUDED A LEGISLATIVE UPDATE IN THIS NEWSLETTER. WE WILL PROVIDE A FULL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE IN THE NEXT EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER.

LATEST NEWS

U.S. SERVICE ACADEMY NOMINATIONS

Each year I nominate qualified graduating high school seniors from the 12th Congressional District for appointments to the following service academies:

- **U.S. Air Force Academy**, Colorado Springs, Colorado
- **U.S. Merchant Marine Academy**, Kings Point, New York
- **U.S. Military Academy**, West Point, New York
- **U.S. Naval Academy**, Annapolis, Maryland

The deadline for submitting a completed application to my Greensboro District Office is November 1, 2006.

You can find additional information and download applications on my website at:

<http://www.house.gov/watt/Services/academy.htm> If you have any questions or concerns, please contact my Service Academy Coordinator, Sharon Fisher (Sharon.Fisher@mail.house.gov) in my Greensboro District Office at (336) 275-9950.

PASSPORT UPDATES

New legislation taking effect January 8, 2007, will require U.S. Citizens and foreign nationals, including children, to present a passport or other secure document when entering the United States. The plan is expected to be phased in as follows:

- **January 8, 2007** – Passports, Merchant Mariner Documents (MMD) or NEXUS Air cards will be required for all air travel and most commercial sea travel within the Western Hemisphere for citizens of the United States, Canada, Mexico and Bermuda.
- **January 1, 2008** – Passports or other accepted documents determined to sufficiently denote identity and citizenship will be required for anyone entering the United States by land from Canada or Mexico, as well as air and sea.

Please visit <http://travel.state.gov> for additional information and to download passport applications and forms. You should allow 6 weeks for normal processing of the passport application. If you need to travel urgently and require a passport within 2 weeks, my office can help process expedited passports that require an additional fee. Please contact my Staff Assistant, Judy Benitez (Judy.Benitez@mail.house.gov) in my Charlotte District Office at (704) 344-9950 for passport assistance.

DID YOU KNOW?

To enhance border security and to facilitate travel, the Department of State began issuing tourist **Electronic Passports** (e-passports) to the public on August 14, 2006.

An Electronic Passport is the same as a traditional passport with the addition of a small chip embedded in the back cover. The chip contains the same data as that found on the biographic data page of the passport (name, date of birth, gender, place of birth, dates of passport issuance and expiration, passport number) and includes a digital image of the bearer's photograph.

The Electronic Passport will allow automated identity verification and faster immigration inspections and is expected to provide greater border protection and security.

Production has started at the Colorado Passport Agency and will be expanded to all domestic passport agencies by the end of 2006.

GROUND BREAKING HELD FOR NEW CHARLOTTE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION CLINIC

On October 10, 2006 the VA held a ground breaking ceremony for its long-awaited Charlotte VA outpatient clinic. The clinic will be located at 8601 University East Drive, just off W.T. Harris Boulevard, and is scheduled to open in November 2007.

The new 65,000-square foot facility will house outpatient surgery and specialty care services and will include an eye clinic, audiology clinic and a mental health clinic. The complex will also contain a laboratory, radiology and an on-site pharmacy and is expected to be staffed by 25 physicians and other support staff to serve up to 25,000 patients a year.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN OPEN ENROLLMENT TO BEGIN NOVEMBER 15

The next Medicare Open Enrollment period for the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan begins November 15, 2006. Seniors and people with disabilities who are satisfied with their current Medicare prescription drug coverage do not need to take any action. However, those who wish to compare plans or make a change may find new options with lower costs and more comprehensive coverage available for 2007. Beneficiaries in North Carolina will have 51 stand-alone prescription drug plans to select from, compared to 38 this year. The open enrollment period ends December 31, 2006.

Many seniors may be eligible to participate in the State of North Carolina's prescription drug assistance program, NCRx. Seniors who meet certain requirements and are enrolled in a Medicare Prescription drug plan that participates with the NCRx program are eligible to have the state contribute \$18 toward monthly insurance premiums. For more information on NCRx and to request an application, call 1-888-488-6279 or visit <http://www.ncrx.gov/>. For additional information on the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan, call Medicare at 800-633-4227 or visit <http://www.medicare.gov>.

NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

Diabetes affects nearly 21 million Americans – or 7 percent of the U.S. population – and more than 6 million of those people do not know they have diabetes, according to the latest prevalence data released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Statistics show minorities continue to be at increased risk for diabetes and its complications such as heart disease, blindness, kidney damage, stroke and lower limb amputations.

For more information on preventing and controlling diabetes, visit the Centers for Disease Control website at <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/>. To obtain information and materials for organizing a diabetes awareness campaign in your community, visit the National Diabetes Education Program website at <http://ndep.nih.gov/index.htm>.

☑ REMINDER: Election Day is Tuesday, November 7. Don't forget to exercise your right to vote!

GRANTS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

APPLICATIONS FOR FEDERAL FUNDING ARE CURRENTLY BEING ACCEPTED UNDER THE FOLLOWING GRANT PROGRAMS:

Upward Bound Program: In the September 22, 2006 *Federal Register* the U.S. Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Education announced the availability of funding for the Upward Bound Program (Includes Regular Upward Bound (UB), Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) and Upward Bound Math and Science (UBMS)). The *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance* numbers are 84.047A and 84.047M. The regular Upward Bound projects are designed to nurture in participants the skills and motivation necessary for success in education beyond secondary school. The Veterans Upward Bound projects are designed to assist veterans in preparing for a program of postsecondary education. The Upward Bound Math and Science projects are designed to prepare high school students for postsecondary education programs that lead to careers in the fields of math and science. ***The application deadline is November 6, 2006.*** Eligible applicants include (a) institutions of higher education, (b) public or private agencies and organizations, (c) combinations of institutions, agencies and organizations and (d) secondary schools under exceptional circumstances. To request an application package or for further information, contact Gaby Watts, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street NW, suite 7000, Washington, DC 2006-8510, (202) 502-7600, TRIO@ed.gov, <http://www.grants.gov>.

Web-Supported Instructional Approaches: In the September 26, 2006 *Federal Register* the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services announced the availability of funding for the Technology and Media Services for Individuals with Disabilities - Research on Technology Effectiveness and Implementation for Children with Disabilities: Web-Supported Instructional Approaches (*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance* number 84.327W). The purposes of this program are to (1) improve results for children with disabilities by promoting the development, demonstration and use of technology, (2) support educational media services activities designed to be of educational value in the classroom setting to children with disabilities and (3) provide support for captioning and video description that is appropriate for use in the classroom setting. ***The application deadline is November 13, 2006.*** Eligible applicants include state educational agencies, local educational agencies (LEAs), public charter schools that are LEAs under state law, institutions of higher education, other public agencies, private nonprofit organizations, outlying areas, freely associated States, Indian tribes or tribal organizations and for-profit organizations. To request an application package, contact the Education Publications Center (ED Pubs), P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398, (877) 433-7827, fax (301) 470-1244, TDD (877) 576-7734, <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html>, edpubs@inet.ed.gov. For further information, contact Jane Hauser, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, room 4067, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-2550, (202) 245-7373.

Parent Training and Information Centers: In the September 26, 2006 *Federal Register* the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services announced the availability of funding for the Training and Information for Parents of Children with Disabilities - Parent Training and Information Centers (*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance* number 84.328M). The purpose of this program is to ensure that parents of children with disabilities receive training and information to help improve results for their children. This priority supports parent training and information centers that will provide parents of children with disabilities, including low-income parents, parents of limited English proficient children and parents with disabilities, with the training and information they need to enable them to participate effectively in helping their children with disabilities to (a) meet developmental, functional and challenging academic achievement goals that have been established for all children and (b) be prepared to lead productive, independent adult lives to the maximum extent possible. ***The application deadline is November 13, 2006.*** Parent organizations are eligible to apply. To request an application package, contact the Education Publications Center (ED Pubs), P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398, (877) 433-7827, fax (301) 470-1244, TDD (877) 576-7734, <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html>, edpubs@inet.ed.gov. For further information, contact Lisa Gorove, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Room

4056, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-2550, (202) 245-7357.

United States Destination Web Site Research, Development, Implementation and Marketing: In the October 5, 2006 *Federal Register* the U.S. Department of Commerce International Trade Administration announced the availability of funding for the United States Destination Web Site Research, Development, Implementation and Marketing (docket number 060920244-6244-01). The purpose of this program is to provide content and information, through a newly designed and implemented Web site or by enhancing an existing Web site, on the United States as a premier destination to international inbound travelers from five key markets: United Kingdom, Japan, Canada, Mexico and Germany. It is envisioned that the award recipient will use funding to conduct market research for each country on the site's international target audience and that this Web site will be the benchmark U.S. travel and tourism information portal for international travelers to the United States. ***The application deadline is November 14, 2006.*** Eligible applicants for the program include all for-profit or non-profit U.S. corporations, associations and organizations, Native American Tribal Governments (federally recognized) and state and local governments. To request an application package or for further information, contact Mr. Brian Beall at (202) 482-5634, fax (202) 482-4279 or Brian.Beall@mail.doc.gov or Ms. Julie Heizer at (202) 482-4904, fax (202) 482-2997 or julie.heizer@mail.doc.gov or visit <http://www.grants.gov>.

Business and International Education Program: In the October 11, 2006 *Federal Register* the U.S. Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Education announced the availability of funding for the Business and International Education Program (*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance* number 84.153A). The Business and International Education program provides grants to enhance international business education programs and to expand the capacity of the business community to engage in international economic activities. ***The application deadline is November 21, 2006.*** Eligible applicants include institutions of higher education that enter into agreements with business enterprises, trade organizations or associations that are engaged in international economic activity - or a combination or consortium of these enterprises, organizations or associations - for the purposes of pursuing the activities authorized under this program. To request an application package or for further information, contact Ms. Tanyelle Richardson, International Education Programs Service, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street NW, room 6017, Washington, DC 20006-8521, (202) 502-7626, tanyelle.richardson@ed.gov, <http://www.ed.gov/HEP/iegps>.

Future Leaders Exchange Program: Host Family and School Placement: In the September 21, 2006 *Federal Register* the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announced the availability of funding for the Future Leaders Exchange Program: Host Family and School Placement (funding opportunity number ECA/PE/C/PY-07-06). Applicants may submit proposals to recruit and select host families and schools for high school students between the ages of 15 and 17 from countries of the former Soviet Union. In addition to identifying schools and screening, selecting and orienting families, organizations will be responsible for (1) providing English language enhancement activities for a small percentage of students who are specially identified, (2) orienting all students at the local level, (3) providing support services for students, (4) arranging enhancement activities and skill-building opportunities, (5) assessing student performance and progress, (6) providing mid-year programming and re-entry training and (7) evaluating project success. ***The application deadline is December 4, 2006.*** Applications may be submitted by public and private non-profit organizations. To request an application package, contact Judy Nowlin, Office of Youth Programs, ECA/PE/C/PY, Room 568, U.S. Department of State, SA-44, 301 4th Street SW, Washington, DC 20547, (202) 203-7527, fax (202) 203-7529, NowlinJR@state.gov, <http://www.grants.gov>, <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/rfgps/menu.htm>. For further information, contact Anna Mussman, Office of Citizen Exchanges, ECA/PE/C/PY, Room 568, U.S. Department of State, SA-44, 301 4th Street SW, Washington, DC 20547, (202) 203-7506, fax (202) 203-7529, MussmanAP@state.gov.

Applicants for federal funding under any federal program are encouraged to contact my District offices. We will assist you in any way we can.

SATELLITE OFFICES

In order to provide convenient services to all my constituents of the 12th District, my staff maintains regular office hours in municipal offices through the 12th District.

Locations and Hours:

CABARRUS COUNTY

9000 Aviation Blvd.

Concord, NC

(704) 793-9000

Hours: 12:00 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.

DAVIDSON AND GUILFORD COUNTIES

LEXINGTON

28 West Center St.

Lexington, NC

(336) 243-2489

Hours: 9:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

THOMASVILLE

10 Salem St.

Thomasville, NC

(336) 475-4210

Hours: 11:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

HIGH POINT

211 South Hamilton St.

High Point, NC

(336) 883-3298

Hours: 2:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

FORSYTH COUNTY

2301 North Patterson Ave.

Winston-Salem, NC

(336) 727-2975

Hours: 9:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

MECKLENBURG COUNTY

216 South Main St.

Davidson, NC

(704) 892-7591

Hours: 9:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

ROWAN COUNTY

130 West Innes St.

Salisbury, NC

(704) 797-9958

Hours: 9:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

NOVEMBER 2006

M	T	W	T	F
		1 Forsyth	2 Rowan	3
6 Forsyth	7 Davidson Guilford	8 Forsyth	9 Rowan	10 Veteran's Day OFFICES CLOSED
13 Forsyth Mecklenburg	14	15 Forsyth	16 Rowan	17
20 Forsyth	21 Davidson Guilford	22 Forsyth Cabarrus	23 Thanksgiving OFFICES CLOSED	24
27 Forsyth Mecklenburg	28	29 Forsyth	30 Rowan	

DECEMBER 2006

M	T	W	T	F
				1
4 Forsyth	5 Davidson Guilford	6 Forsyth	7 Rowan	8
11 Forsyth Mecklenburg	12	13 Forsyth	14 Rowan	15
18 Forsyth	19 Davidson Guilford	20 Forsyth	21 Rowan	22
25 Christmas Day OFFICES CLOSED	26	27 Forsyth	28 Rowan	29

JANUARY 2007

M	T	W	T	F
1 New Year's Day OFFICES CLOSED	2 Davidson Guilford	3 Forsyth	4 Rowan	5
8 Forsyth Mecklenburg	9	10 Forsyth	11 Rowan	12
15	16 Davidson Guilford	17 Forsyth	18 Rowan	19
22 Forsyth Cabarrus Mecklenburg	23	24 Forsyth	25 Rowan	26
29 Forsyth	30	31 Forsyth		